

FORM B – BUILDING

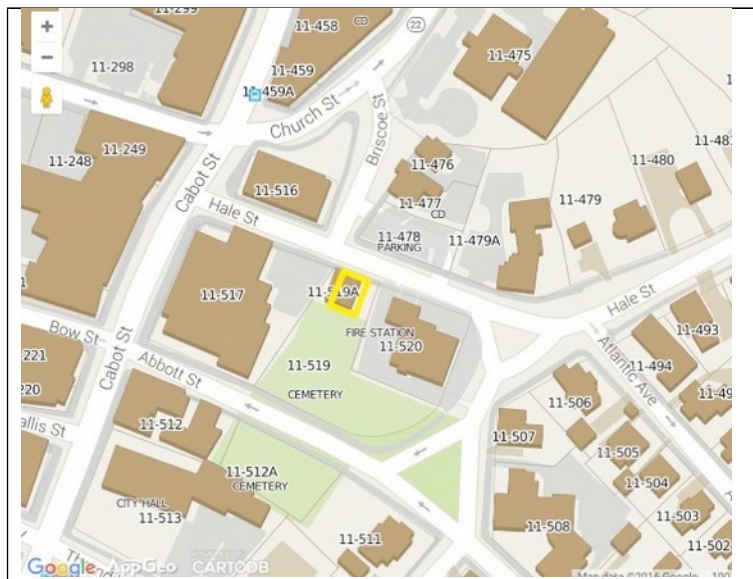
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



East and north (façade) elevations

Locus Map (north at top)



Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11-519A

Salem

BEV.A
, E

BEV.166
(updated)

NRDIS 7/5/1984

Town/City: Beverly

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
downtown

Address: 9 Hale Street

Historic Name: Unitarian Chapel

Uses: Present: meeting hall

Original: chapel/vestry

Date of Construction: ca. 1806

Source: Beverly Carlman manuscript

Style/Form: Gothic Revival

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: granite

Wall/Trim: asbestos shingles with wood trim

Roof: fiberglass asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Gothic Revival renovation (Mid 19th or turn of the 20th c?) –
Asphalt siding (mid 20th century) – Replacement windows
(late 20th century)

Condition: good to fair

Moved: no yes **Date:** 1834

Acreage: 0.03 acre

Setting: Located between Cabot Street and the downtown commercial district to the west and the Central Fire Station, Monument Square, and a dense residential neighborhood to the east. The Ancient Burial Ground surrounds the building.

Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero and Pamela Hartford

Organization: Beverly Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BEVERLY

9 HALE STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Unitarian Chapel occupies a tiny rectangular chapel fronting on Hale Street to the north and surrounded by the Ancient Burial Ground on the west, south, and east. The building is set directly on the sidewalk edge of Hale Street and has minimal side and rear setbacks. The First Baptist Church and First Parish Unitarian Church are located immediately to the west and northwest of this structure, respectively, and Central Fire Station is immediately to the east.

Measuring 31 feet wide by 43 feet deep, the building rises 1 ½ stories from a granite block foundation to a low-pitched, front gable roof with brief gable returns at the back. A small chimney rises from the back end of the west slope of the roof. Exterior walls are clad with asbestos shingles and trimmed with molded wood cornices at horizontal and raking eaves. Windows are typically 1/1 double hung sash with flat casings.

The Hale Street (north) elevation is embellished with a steeply pitched, false gable façade supported on corner pilasters that flare out at the top to support a pedimented gablet. The façade is presumed to be symmetrically composed, with two blocked-in windows at the first floor flanking a single-leaf door with a plywood-covered transom and molded trim in the center bay, surmounted by a small 6/6 double hung window in the half story. (A large plywood sign obscures the western bay of the façade.) The 1980 survey form shows the façade with a pair of contiguous windows in its west bay and what appears to be a double-leaf door with high transom in the center bay. On the interior, the entrance has a vestibule that features double-leaf Victorian doors with a four-light transom; a round, plaster ceiling medallion is centered in the large meeting space.

The west and east elevations are symmetrically arranged with three regularly spaced windows on each side. The symmetrical rear (south) elevation has two widely spaced openings, including a window near the west corner and a single-leaf entrance with molded trim near the east corner. A modern, utilitarian wood stair accesses the doorway.

If the attributed construction date is correct, the Unitarian Chapel is a remarkable survivor of early 19th century ecclesiastical architecture. Significant alterations include a major Gothic Revival renovation in the 19th or possibly early 20th century, asbestos siding, and replacement windows. The chapel is notable for its granite foundation, simple volume, bold false front, and survival of much of its historic fenestration.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The Unitarian Chapel is traditionally thought to have been moved to this site in 1834, where it was used as a chapel by the nearby First Parish Church. According to Robert Rantoul Sr.'s (1778-1858) papers at the Beverly Historical Society, the vestry of the Third Society (later Dane Street Congregational Church) was built around 1806 (the congregation was organized in 1802) and was moved to the Ancient Burial Ground in January 1834. First Parish Church records corroborate the date and location of the move; the church owned the Ancient Burial Ground at the time. A history of the First Baptist Church reports some competing "evidence that [this structure] was originally the vestry of the First Parish Church. . . at the corner of Federal and Chapman Streets" (*The Church with the Harbor Light*: 158). Further investigation and close physical inspection are merited to confirm the original location of the structure and to determine whether the building fabric is consistent with an early 19th century construction date.

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The building was used on this site as a chapel and-or vestry by the First Parish Unitarian Church from 1834 to at least 1903. It was occupied by the Seventh Day Adventist Church in 1910, was vacant in 1912, and was occupied by the Swedish Congregational Church in 1913. The Salvation Army occupied the building from 1914 through 1965. It bought the property in 1921 and took out a building permit that year for unspecified alterations, which conceivably might have included the present Gothic Revival façade. In 1965 the property was sold to the adjacent First Baptist Church for use as an outreach ministry. The Baptists opened the White Whale Coffee House here, "aimed primarily at the students of North Shore Community College, which was then located nearby in the former Briscoe School on Essex Street (now Ocean View Assisted living)." (*The Church with the Harbor Light*: 158). The building is currently used for such community outreach activities as a lunch program for people in need and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Beverly city directories, 1903 – 1965.

Beverly Historical Society Archives. Unpublished typed manuscript by Beverly Carlman, "The White Whale 1806; 9 Hale Street; Beverly, Masschusetts", 1975. City of Beverly, Building Inspector's Office. Building permit records.

Hepler, Margaret. *Beverly; Historic Cultural Resources Survey, 1992-93; Final Report*. June 1993.

Historic maps and atlases: 1897 and 1907 (George H. Walker), 1919 (Yeager-Klinge), 1907-50 and 1958 (Sanborn)

Massachusetts Historical Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Beverly*. 1986.

Thomson, John C. *The Church with the Harbor Light; A Bicentennial History of The First Baptist Church in Beverly; 1801 – 2001*. [No publication information; accessed at the Beverly Historical Society Archives.]

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



West and south elevations

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